

Universalist Anchor

Newsletter of the Universalist National Memorial Church

October 2004 · www.universalist.org

1810 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington DC 20009

202-387-3411



October Worship and Activity Schedule at UNMC

Bold events occur on Sunday.

Worship service begins at 11:00 a.m.

October 3. Mrs. Amy DeBeck, Intern Minister at Unitarian Universalists of Sterling, preaching "Seeds of Faith."

October 10. Rev. Mary Katherine Morn preaching, "For the Long Haul: Our Beloved Community of Memory and Hope." This service will celebrate the gifts of those who came before us and call us into our own faithfulness on behalf of those who will follow.

October 17. Rev. Adam Taylor preaching. Dupont Circle House Tour at 5:00 p.m. (See article page 5)

October 24. Rev. Mary Katherine Morn preaching, "Humbled in Exalted Places: Bringing our Faith to Democracy." As we approach another election day, how will we demonstrate our Universalist faith?

October 31. Rev. Mary Katherine Morn preaching, A Sermon about money and stewardship and commitment and belonging and the greater good and living our faith. This Sunday, we kick off this fall's stewardship campaign at Universalist National Memorial Church.

Upcoming next month.

November 4-7. Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival 4 conference, First Unitarian Church of Worcester (MA). (See article, page 5)

Musings from Rev. Mary Katherine Morn

I want to express my gratitude to all the folks who came out in early September for our quick start workshop. Richard Speck, from the Joseph Priestly District, guided us through conversation that was very helpful for me as your new Interim Minister.

During the workshop three goals were set: to increase attendance at worship; move toward making our church building pay for itself (a report is forthcoming in the next **Anchor**); and bring a greater sense of peace to our experiences at church. An interim ministry is a short period by definition but it seems possible to me to begin work on all of these goals during our time together.

The welcome and membership committee, along with what will soon be the worship committee will focus on the first goal. Al Templeton is gathering a group to look at the second. And I will be exploring various ways to address the goal of bringing more peace to our experiences at UNMC.

One thing I would ask of you, all of you, if you are not currently actively engaged in a spiritual practice, please consider what you might do for your own spiritual deepening/relationship with God. While I believe it is the responsibility of the church to offer opportunities for spiritual growth; I also believe it is our individual responsibility to bring the best that we are to our religious gatherings. In fact, working on our own spiritual growth is one of the obligations that I believe is implicit with church membership. (The others are presence, participation, and sharing our resources.)

Bringing our own deep confidence in God's love for us will surely give us the strength we need to share love with others. As we cultivate the holy light

Continued on page two.

within, our ability to recognize the light in others will be sharpened.

May we meet one another with a generosity of spirit cultivated by prayer, or meditation, or some other spiritual practice. May we always assume that we share an affection for and commitment to UNMC, that the intent of others is good even if the result is never perfect. And may our prayer be for peace. Amen.

In shared ministry,
Mary Katherine

Rev. Morn can be reached in the church office at 202-387-3411 or by email at mkmorn@universalist.org.

Around Our Church

Worship Committee Organized

About a dozen people met Sunday, September 26, with Rev. Morn as the first step toward organizing a worship committee. In her opening remarks, Rev. Morn said that UNMC is uniquely positioned to do wonderful things that make a difference and reaffirmed the top priority set by the quick start workshop earlier in the month achieving a regular attendance of 100 people at worship. She noted that she has experienced many challenges in planning our worship for which she'd like the assistance of a worship committee and that the congregation needs to work on issues of structure and process related to how our worship evolves. Part of her job as an interim minister, she said, is to help our community figure out what it really wants in worship and how it wants to interact with the minister with regard to worship issues.

Participants shared their individual views on what worship is and why we do it, finding a wide range of meanings in worship: ·

“The one spiritual discipline I can do regularly.”

“Connecting with God and with the holy.”

“Fellowshipping, and a search for inspiration.”

“A time to maintain a sense of centeredness.”

“The central act of our spiritual community.”

“A time to focus on sacred goodness; renew our awareness of that goodness, and fortify ourselves with that awareness.”

“An opportunity to explore my faith.”

“Connectedness through time with other people's presence.”

“Carrying on a lifelong tradition of attending church.”

“Being challenged by the questions I should be asking myself.”

The group also listed for Rev. Morn the worship issues that they thought deserve consideration by the worship committee:

“The role of the Declaration of Faith in our worship and how we explain it.”

“Children's Time worship structure - What are the essential elements that provide a foundation for a consistent worship experience while allowing room for innovation that keeps worship fresh?”

“Creating an appropriate atmosphere before worship starts.”

- Pastoral prayer/meditation

- Communion

- Hymn selections

- Inclusive language

“Occasional opportunities for repentance and confession in worship.”

One task for the committee will be to process feedback on the use of the UUA **Singing the Living Tradition** hymnal (SLT) as a supplement to our red hymnal. In the past, we have occasionally used SLT hymns as photocopied inserts in the bulletin, but we now have copies of the full hymnal to try out.

Everyone is encouraged to check out a copy to take home to examine and provide feedback to Rev. Morn or the worship committee once it's fully organized.

The one change in worship that Rev. Morn has made since her arrival is to eliminate the singing of Our Fathers God to Thee each week, a worship element introduced in 1976 as part of the American bicentennial observance. She explained to the worship group that this was a theological issue for her and that she felt that singing a nationalistic song every week contradicted the aim of worship to open us up to a wider world, not a narrow one focused on just our nation.

Rev. Morn said she does plan to do things a little differently in worship from time to time and will seek feedback both from the worship committee and in a monthly after-church forum on a single worship topic, such as music, the role of prayer, or service themes. This month, she plans to introduce an opportunity for worshippers to light candles and leave prayer requests on the side altar before the service begins, so that she can include those intentions in her pastoral prayer. At the same time, the candle-lighting during the organ prelude should contribute to an atmosphere conducive to worship.

About half of the worship meeting participants volunteered to serve on the worship committee. Rev. Morn is interested in hearing from anyone else interested in being on the committee and will be distributing information on the next meeting.

Meet a Member: Linnea McCully

Linnea McCully is one of our newest members, having joined on May 16, 2004. She is a freshman at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota,

where she plans to study elementary education. Linnea is the first second-generation UNMC member in 15 years. She says, "I started attending UNMC as a baby. In one very cute story that my mother will tell if prompted, I was a few years old and at the Christmas service, and during a pause, I said very loudly, 'When is this going to be over?'" She says that the most fun she's ever had at church was doing the Youth Sunday service last year and spending time with her friends Annie Mosher and Emily Skidmore and that she'd like to see the Über Fellowship of Light youth group grow larger over the next few years.

Linnea would like to hear from people at UNMC. You can send correspondence to her at the church office and Kimberly will forward it to her.

Universalist National Memorial Church
c/o Linnea McCully
1810 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Welcome Team

Here's the welcome team schedule for October:

October 3

Greeter: Mary Simmons
Usher: OPEN
Refreshments: Rob Bertram

October 10

Greeter: OPEN
Usher: OPEN
Refreshments: Al & Mary Templeton

October 17

Greeter: Über Fellowship of Light
Usher: Über Fellowship of Light
Refreshments: OPEN

October 17 Vespers Service

Greeter: Sue Mosher

October 24

Greeter: Perry King
Usher: OPEN
Refreshments: OPEN

October 31

Greeter: Donna Simonton

Usher: OPEN

Refreshments: Rob Bertram

Additional ushers are needed for both regular and substitute positions. If you can help the church provide a warm welcome one Sunday per month or even on just an occasional basis, please contact Sue Mosher at sue@turtleflock.com or (703) 241-9828. No prior experience necessary, just a friendly handshake.

News from the Buildings & Grounds Front

Jorn Dakin, Chair

Things continue to happen on the Buildings and Grounds front at UNMC. Recently we made some forward progress in clearing off some of the peeling paint in the front stairwell of the church, just off the front entryway. In particular Paula Harrison tried out some "Peel Away" paint remover on a test patch, and discovered that it seems to be effective in removing the layer of paint that had been over the underlying concrete/plaster of the walls in that part of the church since time immemorial. Greg Wigle kindly donated a good-sized container of the chemical to our efforts. Greg made the comment along the way that those particular walls should probably never have been painted in the first place. The underlying concrete/plaster is apparently intended to be bare, so that it may "breathe" in an unimpeded fashion. The original material evidently was very similar to the pseudo cut-stone to be found elsewhere in the building (to get an idea to what I am referring look at the areas in back of the altar in the sanctuary). Clearing the paint off the walls in the stairwell, for example, will undoubtedly be a reasonably major undertaking. At the same time, the effectiveness of the "Peel Away" leaves us with hope that it will not be an endless task of chipping the paint off piece by piece. In addition to experimenting with the chemical treatment, members of the B&G team cleared off flakes of paint that had peeled off the inside walls in the stairwell, so that for the time being the floors in that part of the church are free of paint chip debris.

Mr. Kominski has recently repaired the front doors of the church so that they look much better and function much better than they have for some time. He has also installed casement window air conditioners in the second and third floor rooms that are directly over the minister's study. The third floor air conditioner is apparently going to require an increase in the power supply available to it through the wall outlet in that third floor room, but the second floor unit is a very new Maytag unit that is ready for use. Work on the outside grounds of the church goes forward. The church now has a new, plastic [non-rusting] seed/fertilizer spreader. Mr. Kominski is also going to be repairing the hinges to the gate from the courtyard out into the back alley. This will make the courtyard more useable for various church purposes.

Finally, feel free to try the new paper towel dispensers in the basement restrooms. We have new soap dispensers and hope to have them installed in the near future.

That's about it for this month.

Covenant Disciple Group

Are you interested in exploring ways to live your faith more fully? Would you like to get to know a small group of UNMCers better? Do you wish for a community that challenges and nurtures you in your spiritual journey?

Sometime in mid-October, I will convene a gathering of individuals interested in participating in a Covenant-Disciple group. We will follow a Wesleyan model of support and accountability. We will meet two times a month for no more than an hour and a half. If you would like to participate, please contact me. You may call me at the church 202-387-3411 or send me an email to mkmorn@universalist.org.

Chancel Flowers

Mary Simmons, Chair

October 3. In memory of Corinne H. Brooks and Seth R. Brooks, Aunt and Uncle by Evelyn Brooks Rowse and James W. .M. Rowse, Jr.

October 10. In loving memory of their parents Dorothy and Leonard Smith and Bill and Lynn Fox, by Lynn, Bill and David Fox.

October 17. In honor of their parents Ruth and James L. Salmon and Audrey and Alton Templeton by Mary S. and Al Templeton.

October 24. In memory of their cousin Vernie Sampson by Jeffrey, Catherine, and Brian Jacobs.

Community Events

Be a Good Dupont Circle Neighbor

Mark your calendar for Sunday, October 17, noon – 5:00 p.m., when the Dupont Circle House Tour will take place in the area roughly centered around the triangle formed by New Hampshire, 19th and T Streets. To welcome visitors to our neighborhood, UNMC will hold a short vespers service at 5:30 that evening. (Maybe someone would also like to organize a dinner outing afterward?)

The house tour committee is looking for volunteers. Maybe you'd like to volunteer with a friend and get to know other people in the neighborhood! On the day of the tour, you could work in one of the individual tour houses or help organizers get everything ready in the morning; contact Jim Mears at JHMears@aol.com or (evenings) at (202) 332-3220. Or, in the days and weeks before the event, you could make some phone calls, sell tickets, or distribute flyers; contact house tour committee chair Maureen Donovan at md48@erols.com.

Denominational Affairs

Jesus in 21st Century Spirituality

What role does Jesus play in 21st century spirituality? How does devotion to Jesus fit within

the broad diversity of contemporary Unitarian Universalism? Join the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship for a free-wheeling exploration of these two questions at the Revival 4 conference November 4-7 at the First Unitarian Church of Worcester (MA). Featured speakers will include UUA President the Rev. William Sinkford and the Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom, author of *Teacher, Guide and Companion: Rediscovering Jesus in a Secular World*. Brochures will be available soon at the church. In the meantime, you can visit the UUCF web site at <http://www.uua.org/uucf/revival/2004/> for more information.

Administrator's Corner

Graphics Whiz Needed

Do you enjoy fiddling with computer graphics and making a printed page come alive? The increasing number of activities at UNMC means we have a real need for someone who can design eye-catching flyers. Please contact church administrator Kimberly Durham Bates at office@universalist.org or (202) 387-3411 if this is something you'd like to help with.

Webmaster Needed

Have you checked out the church's web site at <http://www.universalist.org> lately? It's full of news about church events, plus recent sermons, prayers, and other inspirational articles. While church administrator Kimberly Durham Bates takes care of routine updates, such as posting the monthly *Anchor* and events calendar, a webmaster is needed to spend an hour or two each week on other tasks, such as posting sermons and other longer articles and researching ways to make the web site even better. This is a great opportunity for someone with a little web experience who'd like to build up their resume. Skills required: Good proofreading and experience with HTML and FTP. Experience with the Movable Type blogging software would be a plus, but it's very easy to learn. Please contact church administrator Kimberly Durham Bates at office@universalist.org or (202) 387-3411 if this is something you'd like to help with.

Our Mission

We create a loving community for worship and service in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We welcome all and respect individual beliefs as we grow together.

Our Goals

We want to grow as a spiritual community, both in numbers and in the depth of our faith experience.

We want to revitalize our building to make it a welcoming house of worship, study, fellowship, and service with the potential to contribute financially to the long-term viability of this congregation.

The *Universalist Anchor* is published monthly for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, D.C.

1810 Sixteenth Street NW · Washington DC 20009

mkmorn@universalist.org

office@universalist.org · (202) 387-3411

The Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, Interim Minister

The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox, Minister Emeritus

Board of Trustees: Rob Bertram, Kathryn Desmond,
Richard Hurst, Clint McCully (Assistant Treasurer),
Sue Mosher, Brian Pepper (Treasurer), Vicki Pepper
(Vice Moderator), Greg Wigle (Moderator)

Ms. Jennifer Sandberg, Head Deacon

Dr. Michael O'Brien, Music Director

Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist

Ms. Kimberly Durham Bates, Church Administrator

The Universalist Anchor
The Universalist National Memorial Church
1810 Sixteenth Street NW
Washington DC 20009